

## **CAPITAL FACILITIES, PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES ELEMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that comprehensive plans include a Capital Facilities Element that addresses the capital facilities needs to adequately support anticipated growth over the next twenty (20) years. This plan identifies existing and future public facilities needed to be consistent with the Land Use Element. Updates of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which contains a list of adopted capital projects including costs and projected revenues, are incorporated into the Capital Facilities Element through the annual budgeting process by City Council ordinance. Attached in **Appendix CF-6** is the 2005 CIP for the City which is hereby adopted by reference.

The GMA requires that services and facilities provided to residents and businesses by adjacent jurisdictions and public agencies must also be considered. Several providers of public services and facilities serve the City of Mount Vernon, and the operating plans of these agencies are referenced in the Comprehensive Plan.

The goals and policies of this element are consistent with the Land Use, Housing, Transportation, and Park & Open Space Elements.

While this element includes summary information, inventories and levels-of-service pertaining to parks, open space, and transportation facilities; more comprehensive consideration of these policy areas are provided in the Park & Open Space and Transportation Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Other City-provided services and facilities are considered more fully within this element. Some of these services and facilities are internal to the effective functioning of City government.

This Element addresses the following facilities:

- Police and Corrections;
- Fire and Safety Services;
- City Administrative Offices;
- Public Schools;
- Public Libraries;
- Public Utility Services (Sanitary and Storm Sewers and Solid Waste); and,
- Private Utility Services.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The Mount Vernon Police Department (department) currently has forty-three commissioned officers, one Community Service Officer, one Animal Control Officer, and nine non-sworn support personnel, for a total of 54 employees. In addition, approximately 60 volunteers provide a variety of services in support of department programs.

In planning for future policing focus in the City, the department adheres to the following three distinguishing principles: communication, collaboration, and comprehensiveness.

The department annually evaluates and updates data to keep the Mayor and Council informed and to avoid unexpected fiscal challenges. Prior to the preparation of each year's budget, the department holds a series of internal division-level meetings to develop and/or revise goals and objectives. Personnel are asked to plan, in writing, for their specific divisional needs for the coming year. These needs must align with the department Mission and Broad Goals for reducing crime and improving public safety.

The sustaining Broad Goals of the department have been in place for many years and remain sound. All organizational plans, including annual division-level goals and objectives, are required to be congruous and subordinate to the department's Statement of Broad Goals that are presented below as CF-1 through CF-4:

<b>Goal CF-1:</b>	<b>To decrease the amount of actual and perceived criminal activity.</b>
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<b>Goal CF-2:</b>	<b>To deliver the type of police service consistent with community needs and the ideals of contemporary policing practices.</b>
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<b>Goal CF-3:</b>	<b>To create a community awareness of crime problems and methods of increasing the Police Department's ability to deal with actual or potential criminal activity.</b>
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<b>Goal CF-4:</b>	<b>To cause and maintain a community-wide commitment to community-based policing as an effective means to attaining the Department Mission and ultimately the Department Vision.</b>
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The department also has mid-range goals and objectives for the 2004 to 2008 time frame that are presented below as CF-5 through CF-9:

<b>Goal CF-5:</b>	<b>Improve the cooperation and coordination of inter-agency policing efforts affecting the Mount Vernon Police Department and community.</b>
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- Objective CF-5.1** Continue to encourage all Skagit County police agencies to establish a single philosophy of policing, with strategic policies of similar tone for reducing crime, fear, and neighborhood decay.
- Objective CF-5.2** Study the state of police services in our area. Report on what services might yet be combined, added, or deleted in the interest of efficiency and consistent service to the public.
- Objective CF-5.3** Develop a county-wide mechanism for investigating alleged criminal acts of police employees. This objective is scheduled to be completed in late 2004.

<b>Goal CF-6:</b>	<b>Maintain Department effectiveness as the community grows in area and population.</b>
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- Objective CF-6.1** Update the Police Department Staffing Plan to reflect projected changes in population and call load.
- Objective CF-6.2** Increase the CSO-to-Sworn staffing ratio to allow for a more efficient response to calls for service.
- Objective CF-6.3** Assign a training officer to organize and centralize the Department training function. This action is required to ensure effectiveness, reduce liability, and to ensure compliance with accreditation standards.
- Objective CF-6.4** Recruit and hire bilingual/bicultural officers and support staff, including volunteers, to improve communication between the Department and the community.

<b>Goal CF-7:</b>	<b>Provide equipment that will improve police capability and keep the Department current with advancements in technology.</b>
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- Objective CF-7.1** Continue to acquire updated less-lethal equipment as technology in this area improves.
- Objective CF-7.2** Acquire patrol vehicles in keeping with the most efficient vehicle-to-operator ratio.
- Objective CF-7.3** Continue with the schedule of *replacement* for essential protective/safety equipment such as firearms, radios, and soft body armor.
- Objective CF-7.4** Improve officer safety with the acquisition of thermal imaging equipment to assist with the detection of hidden dangerous

offenders and evidence. This objective is scheduled to be met in late 2004.

**Objective CF-7.5** Replace the aging and outdated multi-purpose vehicle for major crime scenes, extended investigations and high risk incidents.

**Objective CF-7.6** Add VHF to the existing radio system to enable communication with Fire, Public Works, and other service agencies during emergencies.

**Objective CF-7.7** Identify and acquire the necessary basic equipment for handling responses to WMD events of a biological, chemical or nuclear nature.

<b>Goal CF-8</b>	<b>Improve the general police records function, to include issues of accessibility, storage and retention.</b>
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**Objective CF-8.1** Utilizing efficient, up to date storage methods, archive police records, and destroy hard copies as allowed by law.

**Objective CF-8.2** Modify and implement the General Records Retention Schedule for the Department. This objective will be accomplished in late 2004.

<b>Goal CF-9</b>	<b>Develop a relationship between the Department and citizens of Mount Vernon that fosters open communication and trust on issues relating to community safety and security.</b>
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**Objective CF-9.1** Maintain the annual Citizen's Police Academy as a mechanism to accomplish the Department's Broad Goals.

**Objective CF-9.2** Steadily add neighborhoods to the Block Watch program.

**Objective CF-9.3** Utilize communications links such as the Department Web Site, TV10, radio, newspaper and neighborhood newsletters to provide educational and emergency information.

Additional goals and objectives are provided by the Division Commanders who worked with assigned staff to devise ways to meet the department mission and can be found in the below referenced document.

Hereby adopted by reference is the Police Department's, Strategic Plan, dated 2004-2008. This entire document is contained in **Appendix CF-1**.

**FIRE SERVICES**

The Mount Vernon Fire Department (MVFD) formed in 1891 as a volunteer firefighting force and has been providing emergency services to the Mount Vernon community for over 100 years.

Today the MVFD covers twelve square miles of urban, suburban, and some small rural areas. The MVFD provides modern services that include: fire suppression, basic life support emergency medical response, operations level hazardous material spill response, limited technical rescue capabilities, fire inspections, public fire safety education and building pre-fire planning. Current staffing consists of thirty-three career personnel and approximately twenty-five on-call volunteers.

Following is a list of the MVFD stations:

- Fire Station No. 1: 9,500 square feet in size with five apparatus bays, a maintenance bay, modern kitchen and sleeping rooms.
- Fire Station No. 2: 13,728 square feet in size with apparatus bays, a modern kitchen, a meeting room, administration areas, sleeping rooms and also houses a small museum where the original 1920 LaFrance is on public display.
- Fire Station No. 3: 6,644 square feet in size with two apparatus bays, an exercise room, a modern kitchen, a multi-purpose room, a day room, and three sleeping rooms and an administration area.

Following are the seven (7) Goals that the MVFD has set:

<b>Goal CF-10</b>	<b>Develop and implement MVFD staffing to meeting the needs of Mount Vernon.</b>
<b>Goal CF-11</b>	<b>Develop and implement an emergency medical delivery system to meet the needs of Mount Vernon.</b>
<b>Goal CF-12</b>	<b>Enhance MVFD communication with staff, public and elected officials.</b>
<b>Goal CF-13</b>	<b>Improve and broaden MVFD's financial support.</b>
<b>Goal CF-14</b>	<b>Enhance the MVFD Volunteer Program.</b>
<b>Goal CF-15</b>	<b>Replace MVFD Fire Station No. 1.</b>
<b>Goal CF-16</b>	<b>Explore opportunities for consolidations, mergers and/or fire authorities.</b>

The Fire Department's, Strategic Plan, dated January 2005 contains objectives and action items for each of the seven goals outlined above. This entire document is contained in **Appendix CF-2** and is hereby adopted by reference.

### **CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES**

The City of Mount Vernon is organized into the following departments:

- City Attorney;
- City Council;
- Development Services;
- Engineering Services;
- Finance;
- Fire;
- Human Resources;
- Information Services;
- Library;
- Mayor;
- Municipal Court;
- Parks;
- Police; and,
- Public Works.

The City currently employees 209 full-time and 61 part-time employees and current City facilities are summarized in table **CF-1.1**; however, this table does not list all of the property under the City's ownership. See **Chapter 4** for the Parks and Open Space Plan for lists and maps of the City's parks.

**Table CF-1.1: City Facilities**

<b>FACILITY:</b>	<b>ADDRESS:</b>
City Hall	910 Cleveland Ave.
Fire Station #1	901 South 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street
Fire Station #2	1901 North LaVenture Road
Fire Station #3	4701 East Division Street
Library	315 Snoqualmie Street
Municipal Court and Police	1805 Continental Street
Parks and Recreation	1717 South 13 <sup>th</sup> Street
Public Works Administration	1024 Cleveland Ave.
Shops and Storage	405 West Fir Street
Wastewater	1401 Britt Road

**Map CF-3** identifies the facilities summarized in **Table CF-1.1**.

### **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Mount Vernon School District #320 (district) provides public education to the students within the City of Mount Vernon. The district currently has six (6) elementary school sites, two (2) middle school sites and one (1) high school site. The district also has four (4) additional facilities that provide operation support functions to the schools in the form of a central office, a special services office, a transportation facility and a maintenance facility. In addition to the existing school sites the district owns the following seven (7) undeveloped sites:

- 10 acres on East Division Road;
- 10 acres on Swan Road;
- 20 acres on Cleveland Street;
- 201 Fulton (YMCA lease);
- Lot, 1106 East Warren, (added to Mount Vernon High School);
- Lot 1118 East Warren, (added to Mount Vernon High School); and,
- Parking lot, 1002 South 11<sup>th</sup> Street (added to Lincoln School).

Mount Vernon School District Goals ensure:

- Improved student learning;
- Sound resource management;
- Effective support systems;
- Enhanced community partnerships and communications;
- Quality facilities; and,
- Participatory decision-making.

The district completed a six year capital facilities plan which is attached in **Appendix CF-3** and is hereby adopted by reference. During the 2005 Comprehensive Plan update process the district updated its Capital Facilities Plan and requested additional impacts fees be adopted by the Mount Vernon City Council. The district's 2005 update to their Capital Facilities Plan is also contained in **Appendix CF-3**.

#### **PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

The Mount Vernon City Library is a 12,122 square foot facility that has been in its present location at 315 Snoqualmie Street since 1954. The facility started at 3,581 square feet, and was been expanded twice (to 10,033 sq. ft. in 1969 and to the present size in 1981). Extensive renovations were completed in 1999, which did not change square footage but greatly improved the appearance and attractiveness of the facility. The "new look" Mount Vernon Library was featured in an article in the October 1999 issue of *Today's Librarian*.

The library's service area boundaries are one and the same with the City of Mount Vernon's boundaries. The population served according to the 2005 estimate from OFM is 28,210. The library additionally offers free library cards to those who own businesses within city limits and certificated teachers in Mount Vernon. Non-residents of the City of Mount Vernon hold approximately 600 library cards, offered to non-residents at the annual rate of \$80.00 (or \$40.00 for seniors).

The library's 2005 operating budget is \$1,007,000 and projected number of items circulated to the public is about 360,000. The library has a diverse and continually updated collection of approximately 80,000 items, predominantly books but with sizeable numbers of magazines, newspapers, CDs, DVDs, videos and books-on-tape. A growing collection of Spanish language materials in all formats serves the growing Spanish-speaking population of Mount Vernon.

Programs offered by the library include story times and a Summer Reading Program for children, and monthly evening programs for adults. A strong reference collection and reference staff offer further service to the public. The library has 21 computers available to the public, of which 7 are library catalogs only.

The library has 19 full-time equivalent employees (11 full-time and 19 part-time).

### **LIBRARY GOALS**

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1. To increase the public's awareness of library resources and services.
2. To uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and the public's right to know by providing citizens of all ages with access and guidance to information and collections that reflect all points of view.
3. To form partnerships with regional and national organizations in order to provide access to the widest possible range of information resources.
4. To increase current funding by strongly pursuing a broad range of options, including grants, donations and scholarships.
5. To continue providing high quality programming that promotes reading and lifelong learning, and provides leisure entertainment.
6. To develop specialized services that address community needs and are responsive to changing demographics.
7. To select, train and retain staff who are dedicated to serving the needs of all current and potential customers.
8. To utilize technology to provide efficiencies that enhance customer service.
9. To continue working toward the funding, design and construction of a new library facility that will better meet the needs of a growing population.

### **PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES**

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#### **Wastewater:**

The City of Mount Vernon updated its Comprehensive Sewer Plan in 2003 through a contract with HDR Engineering. Through this plan, it is the City's goal to minimize water quality degradation and to maintain compliance with the requirements of the City's Washington Department of Ecology Wastewater Discharge Permit. An ongoing program of sewer system repair and replacement, and enforcement of development standards, will contribute to the reduction of combined sewer overflows, sewer system infiltration and exfiltration. These efforts will promote health and safety of the public, protection of the environment, and enhance the economic vitality of the City.

**Map CF-1** identifies the existing sewer facilities within the City. **Appendix CF-4** contains the Comprehensive Sewer Plan Update, prepared by HDR Engineering dated February 2003 and the Comprehensive Sewer Plan Amendment, prepared by HDR Engineering, dated April 2004 which are both hereby adopted by reference.



**Goal CF-17:** Provide and maintain a sanitary sewer collection system that is consistent with the public health and water quality objectives of the State of Washington and the City of Mount Vernon.

**Objective CF-17.1** Ensure that the sanitary sewer system is adequate to meet the demands of the community.

Policy CF-17.1.1 Adequate sewer service capacity should be assured prior to the approval of any new development application.

Policy CF-17.1.2 Seek broad funding for sanitary sewer services and facilities.

Policy CF-17.1.2 Development should be conditioned on the orderly and timely provision of sanitary sewers.

Policy CF-17.1.3 Actively encourage all residents within the City to connect to public sewer.

**Surface Water:**

The City of Mount Vernon updated its Comprehensive Surface Water Plan in 2003 through a contract with CH2MHILL. Through this plan, it is the City's goal to provide a surface water management framework that protects the public's safety, health and property, conserves and enhances natural systems within the City, and comply with local, state, and federal regulations.

**Map CF-2** identifies the existing stormwater facilities within the City. **Appendix CF-5** contains the Comprehensive Stormwater Management Update, prepared by CH2MHill, dated November 2004, which is hereby adopted by reference.

**Goal CF-18:** Provide, maintain and upgrade surface water management systems to minimize impacts on natural systems and to protect the public, property, surface water bodies, and groundwater from changes in the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff due to land use changes.

**Objective CF-18.1** Provide storm drainage collection and discharge systems that protect public and private property and the natural environment. Ensure that existing and future stormwater systems are properly operated and maintained.

Policy CF-18.1.1 Design storm drainage systems to minimize potential erosion and sedimentation problems, and to preserve natural drainage systems including rivers, streams, flood plains, lakes, ponds and wetlands.

Policy CF-18.1.2 Seek broad funding for stormwater system improvements.

Policy CF-18.1.2 Promote and support public education and involvement programs that address surface water management issues.

Policy CF-18.1.3 Storm and surface water management programs should be coordinate with adjacent local and regional jurisdictions.

**Solid Waste:**

The Skagit County Solid Waste Management Plan (SCWMP) provided a guide for solid waste activities in Skagit County. This document was prepared in response to the Solid Waste Management Act, Chapter 70.95 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

As indicated above, RCW 70.95 delegates the authority and responsibility for the development of solid waste management plans to the counties. Other governing bodies (Cities, Tribes, and Federal agencies) may participate in the County’s planning process or conduct their own plans. State law allows cities to fulfill their solid waste management planning responsibilities in one of three ways:

- By preparing their own plan for integration into the County’s plan;
- By participating with the County in preparing a joint plan; or,
- By authorizing the County to prepare a plan that includes the City.

**Goal CF-19:** Provide a responsible, comprehensive waste management program that includes economic efficiency, environmental sensitivity, and responsiveness to the needs of the community.

**Objective CF-19.1** The City should pursue a reduction of the overall waste stream, recycling, and long-term waste handling and disposal solutions.

Policy CF-19.1.1 Provide and maintain an adequate system of solid waste, recycling collection, disposal, and handling to meet existing and future needs.

Policy CF-19.1.2 The collection of recyclable materials should be supported and promoted.

Policy CF-19.1.3 Coordinate with agencies on educational and other programs for the safe management and disposal of hazardous household wastes.

**GENERAL CAPITAL FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

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**Goal CF-20** Ensure that an adequate supply and range of public services and capital facilities are available to provide reasonable standards of public health, safety, and quality of life.

**Objective CF-20.1** Provide an acceptable level of public services and capital facilities to accommodate anticipated growth

Policy CF-20.1.1 Assess impacts of residential, commercial and employment growth on public services and facilities in a manner consistent with adopted levels-of-service.

Policy CF-20.1.2 Ensure that public services and capital facilities needs are addressed in updates to Capital Facilities Plans and Capital Improvement Programs, and development regulations as appropriate.

Policy CF-20.1.3 Coordinate the review of non-City managed capital facilities plans to ensure consistency with the City Comprehensive Plan.

Policy CF-20.1.4 Ensure that appropriate funding sources are available to acquire or bond for the provision of needed public services and facilities.

### **PRIVATE UTILITIES INTRODUCTION**

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The Utilities Element guides future utility service within the City of Mount Vernon. It helps to ensure that adequate utilities will be available to existing and new development and promotes efficiency in the provision or improvement of service where appropriate and feasible. The City recognizes utilities as key components of the infrastructure that provide critical systems and service to maintain quality of life within the City.

Skagit Public Utility District #1 provides potable water within the City, Puget Sound Energy provides electrical service and Cascade Natural Gas provides natural gas. Other utility services including: cable television, telecommunications, conventional telephone, fiber optic cable systems, cellular telephone service, and petroleum products are provided by various private companies.

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that a utility element address, “the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities, including, but not limited to electrical lines, telecommunication lines, and natural gas lines. During the 2005 update process staff coordinated with all of the utility providers within the City and requested information with regard to their services. Due to the increased security measures that most utility companies put into place following the recent terrorist attacks on the United States several utility companies would not provide detailed information to the City; however, following is the information that the City was able to obtain.

This element contains the general goals, objectives and policies for the Utility Element; however, it is important to keep in mind that planning for private utilities should be recognized as the primary responsibility of the utility providers. Investor-owned utilities in the State of Washington are regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). Utilities under the jurisdiction of the WUTC must provide suitable facilities to supply service-on-demand. State law regulates the rates and charges, services, facilities and practices of utilities. Any change in policy regarding customer charges or the provision of services requires WUTC approval.

**Water:**

Public Utility District #1 (PUD) of Skagit County is a municipal corporation of the State of Washington, established to conserve the water and power resources of the State for the benefit of the people and to supply public utility service per RCW 54.

The District operates the most expansive water system in Skagit County with almost 22,000 metered services, serving roughly 55,000 people an average of 9 million-gallons of water per day. The majority of the District's services are within the Judy Reservoir System which serves the Cities of Burlington, Mount Vernon and Sedro-Woolley as well as surrounding rural and suburban areas. The District also operates remote water systems including: Fidalgo Island, Alger, Cedargrove, Mountain View, Potlatch Beach, Rockport, and Skagit View Village.

District facilities include nearly 600 miles of pipe, and over 28-million gallons worth of storage volume. A goal of the District's Capital Improvement Plan is replacement of two percent (2%) of the District's pipe annually.

**Map CF-4** contains the approximate locations of the existing and proposed water pipes, tanks, pumps and valves that the PUD maintains.

**Natural Gas:**

Cascade Natural Gas (CNG) Corporation provides natural gas service to the City of Mount Vernon. CNG builds, operates and maintains natural gas facilities serving the City of Mount Vernon. CGS is an investor owned utility serving customers throughout the State of Washington.

To serve Mount Vernon, CNG ties into Northwest pipeline near Beaver Lake. A four- and six-inch line serve the City with distribution from sites at McLaughlin and Martin and west of LaVenture Middle school. Their system fully meets existing demand. They currently provide service to approximately 75% of the proposed urban growth area.

CNG has indicated that they have adequate resources to meet the service needs according to their standards. The City should cooperate with them in:

- Identifying joint use corridors;
- Providing early notification of projects; and,
- Optimizing extension of service to new development.

To serve future growth, the maximum capacity of the existing distribution system can be increased as required by one or more of the following:

- A. Increasing distribution and supply pressures in existing lines.
- B. Adding new distribution and supply mains for reinforcement.
- C. Increasing existing distribution system capacity by replacement with larger sized mains.

- D. Adding district regulators from supply mains to provide additional intermediate pressure gas sources to meet the needs of new development.

The location, capacity and timing of these improvements depend greatly on opportunities for expansion and on how quickly the City grows. There are usually several possible routes to connect different parts of the system. The final route taken will depend on right-of-way permitting, environmental impacts, and opportunities to install gas mains with new developments, highway improvements or other utilities.

CNG has an active policy of expanding its supply system to serve additional natural gas customers. CNG's engineering department continually performs load studies to determine CNG's capacity to serve its customers.

Customer hook-up to the distribution system is governed by CNG's tariffs as filed with and approved by the WUTC. Connection to CNG's distribution system is driven by demand, which means that connections cannot be planned in advance; rather connections are initiated by customer requests. CNG also installs service for new construction and conversion from electricity or oil to natural gas.

**Electrical:**

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) is Washington State's largest and oldest energy utility, serving nearly 1 million electric customers primarily in the Puget Sound region, including the City of Mount Vernon.

Clean, renewable and low-cost hydropower is the backbone of PSE's power supply portfolio. PSE purchases 65 percent of their electricity, primarily from plants on the mid-Columbia River. The remainder is produced from their own generating facilities located in Washington and Montana.

PSE has a vast transmission system and distribution substation system that serves Mount Vernon. Future transmission systems and distribution substations will continue to be largely development driven.

It is assumed that PSE can provide adequate serves as the City develops. The City should cooperate with PSE in:

- Design, operation and delivery of service;
- Under-grounding utility lines; and,
- Design standards for new electrical substations.

Priority should be given to under-grounding of existing utilities in the downtown area, being consistent with State WUT tariffs. All new development should continue to have utilities placed underground.

**Telecommunications:**

Verizon is the Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier of telecommunications services in Skagit County. All communities in Skagit County, including Mount Vernon, are served by Verizon through a 100% digital switching network supported with a mix of fiber optic and copper cable.

Fiber optic cable connects all Verizon switching offices in the County and is used for transport of data and voice traffic around the county and out to the rest of the world. A majority of the fiber system is redundantly routed which makes the network self-healing in the event of a cable cut, ensuring continuity of service.

Customers with large bandwidth requirements, can arrange for direct fiber connection to their business by calling Verizon's business office. Prices vary depending upon the size of fiber connection needed, distance from the existing lines to the customer location and other factors.

Cable is deployed in either aerial or buried paths, depending on factors such as terrain, environmental considerations and local ordinances. Mount Vernon is home to Verizon's first packet switching office in the United States.

Customers benefit from Verizon's expertise and capacity to provide high-end voice and data services such as DSL, ATM, ISDN and Frame Relay. DSL is available in many parts of Mount Vernon, as well as in other cities in the county.

Verizon works with local planning departments to plan ahead for growth and development. As a part of standard operating procedure, Verizon works on site-specific proposals and coordinates activities with other utilities.

**Fiberoptics:**

Fueled by the realized benefits of information, communication, and commerce over the Internet, businesses and residential demand for more flexible, higher speed services are increasing. The need for additional bandwidth is expected to grow by 400% to 500% per year. With this kind of growth, most rural cities are finding that private providers do not have the incentive to provide the bandwidth necessary for businesses to compete in today's economy or it's not economically feasible for most entities to obtain.

For today's communities to benefit from the infrastructure build-outs and advances in technology, cities must become "Intelligent Cities." Cities must evolve beyond the current monopolistic closed systems currently in place and built on open fiber transport systems therein providing businesses and homes with the means to use the free enterprise system to choose providers to provide the services they needed to flourish in the high tech atmosphere. Traditional solutions (i.e., of single-use telephones, datacom and video service providers) will never be able to accommodate the such diversity in services because they are invested in the status quo and suffer from lack of flexibility, drawn-out capacity expansion cycles, poor capacity utilization and slow introduction of new services in smaller communities.

In recognition of this problem, and in an effort to meet this demand for more bandwidth at a lower price, the City of Mount Vernon, in conjunction with funding from the Washington State Community Economic Revitalization Board, the distressed Skagit County economic development funds along with the support of local public partners, has deployed a backbone Fiber Infrastructure, which has the capacity to provide the foundation for business and local economic growth. The Fiber Network will provide the foundation for broadband Internet access, VoIp, voice-on-demand (VOD), interactive TV (I-TV), medical imaging, Application Service Provider (ASP) services. This Network's advanced architecture will also enable these services to be offered at affordable prices, through the availability of flexible, low cost managed bandwidth services.

Businesses today are redefining bandwidth as a need and not as a value added service. Bandwidth is now an essential commodity, in the same category as power, water, sewer, and other services. In order for these businesses to be effective in the information intensive economy, they need bandwidth to be delivered on a redundant fiber-optic infrastructure, which will provides the speed and even more essential the reliability of constant service. Cities, which are positioned as the hub of the consumer community, are the logical choice for providing these services because we can. Cities can defend and cost-justify investments in a fiber optic infrastructure and technology because the deployment of that technology can and does increase economic development. The creation of new services and service providers will proliferate, as bandwidth becomes available.

Mount Vernon has designed the Fiber Network to be an Open Service provider Network (OSPN) system allowing as many service providers as possible, to facilitate fair and open competition, and to provide a community's business and residential customers with the greatest diversity of services available, both now and in the future.

This year the City of Mount Vernon has helped create and joined a county wide Fiber Optic Consortium, this was a ground breaking triumph that will bring the county closer together in both Fiber and Wireless communications. The city has also partnered with PUD, by partnering with PUD this will eventually connect the fiber networks throughout Skagit County as PUD has engaged in Fiber Infrastructure build out throughout Skagit County.

The intent of the Fiber network is to create a versatile network capable of bringing multi-service networking solutions to its community. This Network will be designed not only to support the immediate demand for Internet Access, but also to function as transport for additional services and tie all the public agencies together for a more efficient cost saving system. These will eventually be introduced and delivered by other providers.

Benefits Expected form the Fiber Network include:

- Lower cost multi-service network transport for agencies;
- Increased networking reliability;
- Faster service;

- Provide flexible connectivity to meet a variety of needs;
- Offer innovative, cost effective multi-service networking services;
- Ability to rapidly respond to dynamic service demands;
- Flexible bandwidth management;
- Rapid service deployment;
- Address a broad range of application and service needs by providing low cost per bit optical transport;
- The use of Wireless networks, where Fiber doesn't make sense;
- Cost savings in sharing information and greater efficiencies in access of information;
- Working with the Public Partners of the Consortium to expand the public agencies communication needs; and,
- Continue to expand out Fiber and Wireless coverage areas where there is a need.

#### **GENERAL PRIVATE UTILITY GOALS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES**

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**Goal U-1:** Facilitate the development and maintenance of all utilities at the appropriate levels of service to accommodate the growth that is anticipated.

**Objective U-1.1** Provide an adequate level of public utilities to respond to and be consistent with existing and planned land uses within the City.

Policy U-1.1.1 Promote the co-location of new public and private utility distribution lines with planned or existing systems that are both above and below ground in joint trenches and/or right-of-way where environmentally, technically, economically and legally feasible. The City understands that some utilities may have unique safety and maintenance requirements which limit their inclusion in joint use corridors.

Policy U-1.1.2 Whenever a street replacement or repavement occurs the City shall coordinate with all utilities to ensure that any utility replacement or extension occurs before the street repaving or construction occurs. A five (5) year moratorium on street cuts shall be in place following the replacement or repaving of a street.

Policy U-1.1.3 Encourage the appropriate siting, construction, operation, and decommissioning of all utility systems in a manner that reasonably minimizes impacts on adjacent land uses.

Policy U-1.1.4 Continue to mandate the coordination of non-emergency utility trenching activities and street repair to reduce impacts on mobility, aesthetics, noise and other disruptions.

Policy U-1.1.5 Where appropriate require landscape screening of utilities.



Policy U-1.1.6 Identify utility capacity needed to accommodate growth prior to annexation. Do not annex areas where adequate utility capacity can not be provided.

Policy U-1.1.7 Coordinate with utility providers to ensure that the general location of existing and proposed utility facilities is consistent with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Objective U-1.2** Ensure that non-City managed utilities provide service commensurate with required state and federally mandated service obligations and established safety and welfare standards.

Policy U-1.2.1 Coordinate the exchange of data with utility providers. Provide utility providers with current information on development patterns and permit activity within the City. Provide relevant information on population, employment, and development projections.

Policy U-1.2.2 New telecommunications and electric utility distribution lines should be installed underground within the City, where practical, in accordance with rules, regulations, and tariffs applicable to the serving utility.

Policy U-1.2.3 New, reconstructed or upgraded towers and transmission lines should be designed to minimize aesthetic impacts appropriate to their surroundings whenever practical.